

# REPORT



## **140<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU) DOHA, QATAR FROM 6<sup>TH</sup> TO 10<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2019**



### **Attended by:**

Hon. Speaker Nicholas Prea  
Hon. Jany Letourdi  
Hon. Waven William  
Mrs. Tania Isaac

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## **1.0 Introduction**

The Speaker of the National Assembly, Hon. Nicholas Prea headed a delegation comprised of Hon. Waven William-Member for Grand Anse Mahe, Hon. Jany Letourdi –Member of the National Assembly and Mrs. Tania Isaac-Deputy Clerk/IPU Desk Officer to the 140<sup>th</sup> Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) held from 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2019 in Doha, Qatar. The Members took part in different forums and side meetings including making interventions in the General Debate, successfully co-chaired the SIDS meeting, made speeches in the Women Parliamentary Forum, chaired the drafting Team for the Resolution to support Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe hit by *Cyclone Idai* and also presented the draft Resolution before the Assembly for approval. The collective and proactive participation of the delegation pushed the agenda of SIDS grouping despite very little presence of the SIDS participation within the IPU.



*The delegation of Seychelles at the 140<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of IPU*

## **2.0 The Programme of the General Assembly/Side Meetings**

### **2.1. Side Meeting of the African Group/SADC PF Group**

The Programme of the 140<sup>th</sup> IPU General Assembly (Annex 1) began on Friday the 5<sup>th</sup> with different Committee meetings held ‘in Camera’. At the same time, the delegation of Seychelles took part in regional side meetings including the SADC Parliamentary Forum and the African Parliamentary Union Meeting. Both meetings dealt with the same issues on the Agenda of IPU as followed:

- Report of the Representatives of the African Group/SADC PF Group in the IPU Executive Committee

The representative of the African Group/SADC PF Group reported on the decisions and discussions of the IPU Executive Committee. Members were updated on subscriptions fees, the issue of salary for the Secretary General, the performance of IPU at the United Nations and the financial expenditures of IPU. All countries of Africa pledged to support the Emergency Item to be voted by the Assembly ie. "Call for urgent international action to support Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe bit by Cycone Idai. Seychelles further informed both meetings that the Small Islands Developing States will be lobbied to support this emergency item.

The President of IPU, Hon. Gabriel Cuevas attended the African Group Meeting and during her brief presentation she informed the meeting that she will be touring the African continent during the year and big countries such as Nigeria, South Africa and also Namibia have been earmarked.

- The Emergency item to be included on the agenda of the 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly  
There were originally five Emergency Items on the Agenda : (1) Providing international protection for the Palestinian people; (2) Protection of the rights and dignity of Muslim minorities around the world; (3) Call for urgent international action to support Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe bit by Cyclone Idai; (4) Establishing and delivering an international protection mechanism for the Palestinian people in accordance with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law: the role of parliaments and the IPU, (5) Preventing and combating racism, intolerance, Islamophobia and xenophobia.
- Amendments proposed by the Executive Committee  
The meeting heard the amendments being proposed by the Executive Committee to be presented for adoption before the Assembly.
- Vacancies to be filled during the 140<sup>th</sup> Assembly  
There were several vacancies on different Standing Committees. The Standing Committee on Human Rights of Parliamentarians, Committee on the Middle East Questions, Group of Facilitators for Cyprus, Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law High level Advisory on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism had vacancies to be filled from Members of the SADC PF and African Group in General.

## **2.2. The Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Meeting**

The SIDS meeting took place on Monday the 8<sup>th</sup> from 1.15 p.m. to 2.30 p.m. in President Suit 1 and was attended by Seychelles, Fiji, Samoa, Dominica, Barbados, Marshall Islands, St Kitts and Nevis, Sao Tome and Principe, Hawaii and Antigua and Bermuda. The Group paid its respect for the departed the former Speaker of Fiji, Hon. Loveni by observing a special one minute of silence. The Speaker of Seychelles, Hon. Nicholas Prea presided over the meeting and all delegations present deliberated on

actions taken by their respective state to curb the adverse effect of climate change. The Group recommended that a robust agenda is prepared ahead of the 141<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of IPU to be held in Serbia.



***The SIDS grouping at the 140<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of IPU***

### ***2.3. The Governing Council***

The Governing Council which is composed of the President of IPU-Hon. Gabriella Cuevas, the Secretary General of IPU-Mr. Martin Chungong and all Member countries met on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> to be updated on the activities of IPU including the Financial situation of the IPU and draft Budget for 2020 ; Report of the President; and the Interim report of the Secretary General.

### ***2.4 The General Assembly Debate***

The Start of the General Debate on the theme *“Parliaments as platforms to enhance education for peace, security and the rule of law”* began soon after the meeting of the Governing Council and Speaker Prea was 40<sup>th</sup> on the speaker’s list of intervention. When he took the stand, the Hon. Speaker shared the progress of Seychelles in implementing legislations and policies to provide free and accessible education for boys and girls from primary to post-secondary level. He also allowed the General Assembly to appreciate progress in health, legislations passed by the parliament to strengthen institutions relating to human rights and the rule of law.

### ***2.5 The Women Parliamentary Forum***

Hon. Jany Letourdi participated in the Women Parliamentary Forum and intervened in the Parity debate on *“the role of fair and free trade and investment in achieving the*



SDGs, especially regarding economic equality, sustainable infrastructure, industrialization and innovation”. She gave an overview of the laws passed by the Seychelles Parliament over the years to promote equality in employment and investment in small and medium enterprises structures.

## **2.6 Meeting with the President of IPU**

The delegation was invited by the President of IPU, Hon. Gabriella Cuevas Baron in a bilateral meeting and the Speaker took this opportunity to lobby for Seychelles inclusion in the African Tour of the President this year.

## **2.7 The Emergency Item**

After a voting procedure in accordance with the rules and procedure governing IPU, the Emergency Item overwhelmingly adopted by the Assembly was the one entitled “call for urgent international action to support Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe hit by cyclone Idai”.



***Hon. William as Chair of the drafting team, presenting the resolution on Cyclone Idai to the General Assembly***

The plenary debate on the resolution provided an opportunity for exchanges of genuine concern between the participants. Several speakers took the floor many of whom expressed condolence to the people affected. In Malawi, it was reported that more than 20% of its population is in need of assistance.

Hon. William whilst presenting the resolution to the General Assembly stated that “many delegates underscore the urgent need to counter climate change to avoid

severe impact from future natural disasters that can affect all areas of the world if we do not take concrete measures to reverse climate change”.

### **3.0 Resolutions of the 140<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to be localized by Members of IPU**

The 140<sup>th</sup> General Assembly adopted the following Resolutions:

- Call for urgent international action to support Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe hit by cyclone Idai.
- Parliaments as platforms to enhance education for peace, security and the rule of law
- the role of fair and free trade and investment in achieving the SDGs, especially regarding economic equality, sustainable infrastructure, industrialization and innovation
- Non-admissibility of using mercenaries and foreign fighters as a means of undermining peace, international security and the territorial integrity of States, and violating human rights

### **4.0. Conclusion**

The delegation from the National Assembly contributed immensely to the overall activities of the General Assembly. The Members actively participated in committee meetings and forums throughout. The unanimous adoption of the resolution on support to Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe hit by cyclone Idai” by the Assembly is yet another victory for the Seychelles parliament. As much as it addresses further the issue of climate change, the active participation of Seychelles in such activities at IPU show our prominence in the fight against the effect of climate change despite our size.

### **5.0 Recommendations from the delegation**

Following this successful mission, the delegation would like to propose the following recommendations;

- that the Report of the 140<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of IPU be disseminated as widely as possible
- that the President of IPU, Hon. Gabriella Cuevas include the Seychelles as one of the countries for visiting on her IPU presidency summer tour in 2019 in the Africa region,

- that the National Assembly of Seychelles adopt the Resolutions of the 140<sup>th</sup> IPU General Assembly especially the one Cyclone Idai
- that the National Assembly of Seychelles makes the topic of Climate Change one of the oversight agenda focus item, with regards to the National Determined Contribution (NDC) targets as a signatory country to the Paris Agreement.